



The Dual Language/English as a Second Language (DL/ESL) Department focuses on increasing student achievement by addressing the academic, linguistic, and social needs of Emergent Bilinguals (EBs). To accomplish this goal, the DL/ESL department oversees the DL and ESL instructional programs, sheltered instruction, summer programs, parent engagement and education, and campus Language Proficient Assessment Committees (LPACs), which are responsible for (a) identifying and reclassifying EBs and (b) monitoring reclassified EBs.

Key Findings

Implementation

- 48% of district students were EBs ($n = 63,354$), a three percentage-point decrease over one year (2025; $n = 69,780$).
- Over two-thirds of TWDL campuses in 2026 had lower percentages of African American (69%) and economically disadvantaged (71%) opt-in students than at the campus overall.

Stakeholder Feedback

International Welcome Center Survey

- Most parents (97%) agreed that the services they received during orientation at the International Welcome Center were excellent (*Goal: 98%; Almost Met*).

DL/ESL Instructional Specialist Survey

- The majority of DL and ESL staff members rated all resources (83%; *Goal: 88%*) and all supports (81%; *Goal: 88%*) provided by DL and ESL Instructional Specialists as being beneficial, with ESL staff ratings typically higher than DL staff.
- The most frequently mentioned support provided by the DL/ESL Department was resources/materials, while the most requested improvement was regarding the need for additional resources/materials.

Student Outcomes

TELPAS

- One-year and two-year trends showed declines in EB *TELPAS* composite, with an increase in the percentage of students scoring at the lower proficiency levels and a decrease at the higher levels.
- EB *TELPAS* Domain results for 2026 show a decline compared to 2025 in Speaking, Reading, and Writing with an increase in the number of students at the beginning level and a decrease at the higher levels. Listening results were mixed.
- The DL/ESL Department did not meet their two *TELPAS* level movement goals: 29% of EBs progressed at least one proficiency level, compared to 33% in 2025 (*Goal: 34% or higher*). In addition, 13% of EBs regressed at least one proficiency level, compared to 12% in 2025 (*Goal: 12% or lower*).
- EB regression rates have generally increased since 2025 though are still lower than 2024 regression rates, while progression rates have decreased over the same two years.

i-Ready

- The proportion of EBs placed at On Grade-Level or Above Grade Level increased significantly from BOY to EOY across all grade level groups and subjects, though 2025 to 2026 EOY results were mixed.
- Across grade levels and subjects, 43% to 69% of EBs met 100% of their typical growth targets in 2026, which was the same or slightly lower than 2025 (range: 48% to 72%).
- While all grade spans and subjects began the year below 50% On-Grade Level proficiency, K–8 EBs at least doubled their gains by EOY for mathematics and reading (English), while K–5 EBs increased by 50% for reading (Spanish).
- Across subjects, at least 45% of EBs starting below grade level made meaningful progress by EOY, highlighted by at least 54% of students two or more levels behind and at least 45% of students one level behind advancing at least one level.

STAAR/EOC

- EBs met two out of four DL/ESL Department *STAAR Meets+* goals (Met grades 3–5 reading goals and grades 6–8 mathematics but did not meet grades 3–5 mathematics and grades 6–8 reading goals).
- *STAAR* and *EOC* EB *Meets+* rates from 2025 to 2026 saw no change or increased for all grade groupings and subjects, with the exception of Grades 6–8 reading.



STAAR/EOC by TELPAS

- Similar to previous years, EBs achieving the higher proficiency levels on TELPAS performed better on STAAR/EOCs at Meets+.

Dallas International Academy (DIA) Student Outcomes (Newcomers)

- Compared to other high school newcomer students in 2026, DIA students:
 - Performed generally comparable or higher on attendance, 9th grade on track, TELPAS Progression, and *Algebra I* EOC, and
 - Performed generally comparable or lower on TELPAS Proficiency (at Advanced and Advanced High), *English I and II* EOCs, and mathematics ACPs.

ELP Accountability

- **52%** of campuses received 4 English Language Proficiency accountability points, the highest number of points possible.

Magnet Programs

- Qualified EBs received lower rates of offers than monitored students and had lower participation rates in magnet programs than NonEBs and monitored students.

State/Other Large, Urban Texas Districts

- Compared to the state and other large, urban Texas districts in 2025, Dallas ISD EBs:
 - Performed generally comparable or higher on STAAR and EOCs,
 - Performed generally comparable or lower on TELPAS Proficiency and TELPAS Progression.

Recommendations

- **Collaboratively work to increase response rate for DL/ESL Instructional Specialist Surveys.**

Of the 166 staff members who received an invitation to complete the DL Instructional Specialist Survey, only 115 (59%) provided substantive feedback. Similarly, of the 131 staff members who received an invitation to complete the ESL Instructional Specialist Survey, only 68 (52%) provided substantive feedback. Although staff perceptions of the DL and ESL instructional specialists were generally positive, the less-than-ideal sample size increases the **risk of response bias**. In order to get robust perception data, staff from Program Evaluation and the DL/ESL Departments should work together to **communicate to survey participants**, before and during the survey administration window, the importance and benefit of staff survey participation.

- **Strengthen DL/ESL Instructional Specialists supports.**

Although DL and ESL staff generally rated supports and resources provided by DL and ESL Instructional Specialists in 2026 as being beneficial, aggregate ratings were at least 5 percentage points lower than in 2025. To improve specialist support, participants requested **more resources/materials**, **more timely** supports and resources, and **more PD**. The DL/ESL Department should consider **reviewing qualitative feedback** to assess the feasibility of addressing suggested areas of improvement and **collecting staff feedback at more regular intervals** to support staff throughout the school year. This could include informal check-ins, focus groups, or dedicated feedback surveys. This will allow specialists to **identify gaps** and provide timely and tailored support according to specific needs by offering PD sessions, creating new resources, offering specialized workshops, or providing one-on-one coaching in areas where staff need more assistance.

- **Focus on improving EB English proficiency ratings.**

Overall, the DL/ESL Department did not meet its two goals for EB level movement on TELPAS. The percentage of EBs progressing at least one proficiency level fell to 29% in 2026 from 33% in 2025, and the percentage of EBs regressing at least one proficiency level rose to 13% in 2026 from 12% in 2025. One-year and two-year trends also showed declines in TELPAS composite and domain proficiency ratings. Additionally, TELPAS proficiency and TELPAS progression results were generally comparable or lower when comparing Dallas ISD's EBs to the state and other large, urban Texas districts. To address these trends, program staff should consider 1) **analyzing specific domains and subskills** that are contributing toward the proportion of EBs not progressing to the highest proficiency levels; 2) **leveraging DL/ESL instructional specialists** to help support teachers of EBs in improving the specific skills identified; and 3) **monitoring EBs** progress through facilitated collaboration among educators, administrators, parents, and EBSPED specialists.